App. No 10/018,143
Amdt. Dated January 5, 2004
Reply to Office Action of December

2652

JAN 0 9 2004

Reply to Office Action of December 3, 2003

## IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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In the Application of

Ser.No.:

10/018,143

Filed:

April 3, 2002

For:

APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR COATING AN OPTICALLY

READABLE DATA CARRIER

Art Unit:

2652

Examiner:

Klimowicz, William Joseph

RECEIVED

JAN 1 3 2004

**Technology Center 2600** 

Commissioner for Patents

Alexandria VA 22313-1450

## **AMENDMENT IN RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION DATED 12/03/03**

There are no changes to the Claims.

Dear Sir:

In order to be responsive to the outstanding office action requirement, Applicants elect Group 1, claims 37 – 53, with traverse, for prosecution on the merits.

However, as discussed in detail in Applicants' previous amendment dated October 14, 2003, it is respectively submitted that unity of invention is in fact present. In particular, Applicants respectively submit that all of the pending claims do in fact have the same or corresponding special technical features. This common feature is that a transparent adhesive film that is provided with adhesive on one side is provided, with this film serving for protecting a data carrier surface. The patent rules do not require

App. No 10/018,143

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that all independent claims be identical, since under such circumstances separate

independent claims would not be considered. It is furthermore respectively submitted

that the criterion for consideration of unity of invention is whether or not all of the

independent claims relate to a single general inventive concept, not whether all of the

claims are identically classified.

Applicants have attempted to be fully responsive to the outstanding office action.

However, should the Examiner have any further comments or suggestions, or wish to

discuss the merits of the application, the undersigned would very much welcome a

telephone call in order to discuss any outstanding issues and to expedite placement of

the application into condition for allowance.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robert W. Becker, Reg. No. 26,255

Robert - Becke

for applicant(s)

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